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**SMILEY WANG-EKVALL, LLP**

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Attorneys for Elissa D. Miller, Chapter 7  
Trustee

**UNITED STATES BANKRUPTCY COURT**

**CENTRAL DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA**

**LOS ANGELES DIVISION**

In re

GIRARDI KEESE,

Debtor.

Case No. 2:20-bk-21022-BR

Chapter 7

**DECLARATION OF LEI LEI WANG  
EKVALL IN SUPPORT OF  
STIPULATION AUTHORIZING  
PAYMENT OF CLIENT'S SETTLEMENT  
FUNDS AND FEES AND EXPENSES TO  
BE DISBURSED TO THE ESTATE AND  
TO CO-COUNSEL**

**[No Hearing Required]**

I, Lei Lei Wang Ekvall, declare:

1. I am a partner with Smiley Wang-Ekvall, LLP, attorneys for Elissa D. Miller, Chapter 7 Trustee of the bankruptcy estate of Girardi Keese (the "Trustee"). I am licensed to practice before this Court and the courts of the State of California. I know each of the following facts to be true of my own personal knowledge, except as otherwise stated and, if called as a witness, I could and would competently testify with respect thereto. I make this declaration in support of the *Stipulation Authorizing Payment of Client's Settlement Funds and Fees and Expenses to be Disbursed to the Estate and to*

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1 *Co-Counsel* (the "Stipulation"). Unless otherwise defined in this declaration, all terms  
2 defined in the Stipulation are incorporated herein by this reference.

3 2. According to the Court's docket, on December 18, 2020, an involuntary  
4 chapter 7 bankruptcy petition was filed against Girardi Keese ("Debtor"). As of the filing  
5 of the involuntary petition, Debtor was counsel of record in a significant number of  
6 matters which were undertaken on a contingency basis.

7 3. The petitioning creditors moved for the appointment of an interim trustee  
8 which was granted by the Court by order entered January 5, 2021. The Trustee was  
9 appointed as the interim chapter 7 trustee on January 6, 2021. The order for relief was  
10 entered January 13, 2021 and, the same date, the Trustee was reappointed and has  
11 been serving in that capacity since.

12 4. I am advised that prior to the petition date, Debtor and Cochran were  
13 retained by the Client and commenced an action against various defendants in  
14 connection with a fire at a building known as Ghost Ship (the "Litigation"). The Litigation  
15 was recently resolved pursuant to a confidential settlement agreements.

16 5. The retention agreement between the Debtor, Cochran and the Client  
17 provided that Cochran and the Debtor would receive a percentage of the total recovery  
18 from their representation of the Client, plus costs.

19 6. I am advised that Alexander is currently holding the first settlement payment  
20 due to the Client, inclusive of fees and costs due to the Debtor and Cochran, in its trust  
21 account (the "First Settlement Payment"). A final settlement payment, inclusive of fees  
22 and costs due to the Debtor and Cochran, is due to be paid by the defendants on or  
23 before August 31, 2021 (the "Final Settlement Payment"). The First Settlement Payment  
24 and the Final Settlement Payment are sometimes collectively referred to as the  
25 "Settlement Proceeds."

26 7. I am advised that in addition to the Settlement Proceeds which are either  
27 already in Alexander's possession or which are anticipated on or before August 31, 2021,  
28

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1 additional settlement proceeds may be forthcoming from Chor Ng, one of the defendants.  
2 The amount and timing of those payments are uncertain.

3 8. Based on the First Settlement Payment currently held by Alexander, the  
4 Debtor and Cochran are entitled to share a \$562,000.00 contingency fee equally, or  
5 \$281,250.00 each.

6 9. Cochran has no reimbursable costs. The Debtor incurred \$352,924.26 in  
7 total costs, of which \$157,703.92 is allocated to the Client based on the Client's  
8 settlement amount relative to the settlement amounts to be received by other plaintiffs  
9 represented by the Debtor.

10 10. The Final Settlement Payment, which is due on or before August 31, 2021,  
11 will entitle the Debtor and Cochran to share an additional contingency fee of \$131,250.00  
12 equally, or \$65,625.00 each.

13 11. In order to avoid any reluctance on the part of Alexander to remit the  
14 Settlement Proceeds to the Trustee, the parties have entered into the Stipulation setting  
15 out the costs to be deducted from the Settlement Proceeds and the allocation of the  
16 contingency fee between Cochran and the Debtor, with the balance of the Settlement  
17 Proceeds being remitted to the Client.

18 12. The Client resides in Europe, and the most expeditious way for the Trustee  
19 to disburse the Client's share of the Settlement Proceeds would be by wire to an account  
20 designated by the Client. The order approving the Stipulation requests authority to do so  
21 under these unique circumstances.

22 I declare under penalty of perjury under the laws of the United States of America  
23 that the foregoing is true and correct to the best of my knowledge.

24 Executed on this 26th day of February, 2021, at Costa Mesa, California.

25 /s/ Lei Lei Wang Ekvall  
26 LEI LEI WANG EKVALL  
27  
28

## PROOF OF SERVICE OF DOCUMENT

I am over the age of 18 and not a party to this bankruptcy case or adversary proceeding. My business address is 3200 Park Center Drive, Suite 250, Costa Mesa, CA 92626.

A true and correct copy of the foregoing document entitled (*specify*): **DECLARATION OF LEI LEI WANG EKVALL IN SUPPORT OF STIPULATION AUTHORIZING PAYMENT OF CLIENT'S SETTLEMENT FUNDS AND FEES AND EXPENSES TO BE DISBURSED TO THE ESTATE AND TO CO-COUNSEL** will be served or was served (**a**) on the judge in chambers in the form and manner required by LBR 5005-2(d); and (**b**) in the manner stated below:

**1. TO BE SERVED BY THE COURT VIA NOTICE OF ELECTRONIC FILING (NEF):** Pursuant to controlling General Orders and LBR, the foregoing document will be served by the court via NEF and hyperlink to the document. On (*date*) February 26, 2021 I checked the CM/ECF docket for this bankruptcy case or adversary proceeding and determined that the following persons are on the Electronic Mail Notice List to receive NEF transmission at the email addresses stated below:

☒ Service information continued on attached page.

**2. SERVED BY UNITED STATES MAIL:**

On (*date*) February 26, 2021, I served the following persons and/or entities at the last known addresses in this bankruptcy case or adversary proceeding by placing a true and correct copy thereof in a sealed envelope in the United States mail, first class, postage prepaid, and addressed as follows. Listing the judge here constitutes a declaration that mailing to the judge will be completed no later than 24 hours after the document is filed.

The Honorable Barry Russell  
U.S. Bankruptcy Court  
Roybal Federal Building  
255 E. Temple Street, Suite 1660  
Los Angeles, CA 90012

☒ Service information continued on attached page.

**3. SERVED BY PERSONAL DELIVERY, OVERNIGHT MAIL, FACSIMILE TRANSMISSION OR EMAIL** (*state method for each person or entity served*): Pursuant to F.R.Civ.P. 5 and/or controlling LBR, on (*date*) \_\_\_\_\_, I served the following persons and/or entities by personal delivery, overnight mail service, or (for those who consented in writing to such service method), by facsimile transmission and/or email as follows. Listing the judge here constitutes a declaration that personal delivery on, or overnight mail to, the judge will be completed no later than 24 hours after the document is filed.

☒ Service information continued on attached page.

I declare under penalty of perjury under the laws of the United States that the foregoing is true and correct.

February 26, 2021

*Date*

Gabriela Gomez-Cruz

*Printed Name*

/s/ Gabriela Gomez-Cruz

*Signature*

**ADDITIONAL SERVICE INFORMATION (if needed):**

**1. SERVED BY THE COURT VIA NOTICE OF ELECTRONIC FILING ("NEF")**

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